
Education Committee

HB 2373

Brief Description: Enacting provisions to improve educational outcomes for homeless students.

Sponsors: Representatives Parker, Lytton, Stonier, Dahlquist, Seaquist, Zeiger, Santos, Farrell, Pettigrew, Kagi, Bergquist, Walsh, Pollet, Fey, Ryu, Roberts, Cody, Gregerson, Orwall, Haler, S. Hunt, Tarleton, Freeman, Walkinshaw, Muri and Habib.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to report data on homeless students to the Governor and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, which must be disaggregated by subgroups of students at both the state and district level.
- Requires the OSPI to report to the Legislature dropout rates for homeless students in grades seven through 12.
- Requires the OSPI to develop or acquire a short video that provides information on identifying and providing support to homeless students, and why these activities are critical to student success.
- Requires school districts to strongly encourage additional training for staff and homeless student liaisons.
- Requires school districts to provide students with a parent brochure explaining the educational rights of homeless students each year.

Hearing Date: 1/27/14

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

The federal McKinney-Vento Act requires local school districts to identify homeless students and provide them with support. Between 2005 and 2011, the number of homeless students identified in the State of Washington increased by 96 percent, to 27,300.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Office of Superintendent of the Public Instruction (OSPI) is the agency charged with overseeing K-12 public education in Washington. The OSPI submits a report to the Legislature each year, accounting for the educational progress of each student in the state. One component of these reports is the dropout rates for students in grades seven through 12 by ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and disability status. The dropout rates for homeless students are not currently tracked or reported. The OSPI also tracks and reports transportation expenditures, including additional expenditures for transporting homeless students.

All school districts are required to post the educational rights of homeless students in all school buildings and throughout the community. The OSPI has a variety of posters related to this subject on its website that can be ordered or printed for free.

The OSPI has established a variety of programs that provide educational support and opportunities for students, including the Learning Assistance Program, the Highly Capable Program, and the Running Start Program.

Summary of Bill:

The OSPI must report to data on homeless students the Governor and the Superintendent of Public Instruction beginning December 1, 2014, and each even-numbered year thereafter. This report should be disaggregated by subgroups of students, at both the state and district level, and include the following:

- the number of homeless students enrolled in public schools;
- the number of students participating in the Learning Assistance Program, the Highly Capable Program, and the Running Start Program; and
- the academic performance and educational outcomes of homeless students.

In the annual report to the Legislature, the OSPI must report dropout rates for homeless students in grades seven through 12, in addition to the previously required student subgroups.

The OSPI, in collaboration with community experts on homelessness and homeless education policy, must develop or acquire a short video to be posted on the OSPI's website. The video must provide information on identifying and providing support to homeless students, and why these activities are critical to student success.

School districts are required to strongly encourage an all-school staff review of the video each year, and a state training for the district-designated homeless student liaison. The school districts must provide students with a parent brochure explaining the educational rights of homeless students each year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 22, 2014.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.